

## STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

**Class Title: Senior Archaeologist**

**Class Code: 30789**

---

### **A. Purpose:**

Manages archaeological contracts for government agencies and other organizations, maintains computerized archaeological site and survey inventory, recommends approval of mining and exploration permits, and directs seasonal archaeological professional staff in excavation and analysis functions to preserve and protect the cultural resources of South Dakota.

### **B. Distinguishing Feature:**

Senior Archaeologists serve as principal investigator on archaeological projects and have signature authority on the final report submitted; are responsible for directing work under the South Dakota Department of Transportation cultural resource management contract, the State mining permit program, other cultural resource management contracts, and the computerized archaeological site and survey inventory system; and is responsible for the inventory, consultation, and repatriation of human remains and funerary objects as the burial coordinator for the state repository

Archaeologists conduct cultural resource surveys, process and analyze materials, and direct work under the South Dakota Department of Transportation cultural resource management contract, the State mining permit program, other cultural resource management contracts, and the computerized archaeological site and survey inventory system.

### **C. Functions:**

*(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions which may be found in positions of this class.)*

1. Manages and monitors archaeological contracts for state departments and other organizations to ensure that federal and state regulations are met.
  - a. Reviews work plans of construction projects to determine whether construction activity will impact significant historic or prehistoric archaeological sites.
  - b. Directs archaeologists to ensure quality and accurate artifacts, data, and results are produced.
  - c. Recommends archaeological sites for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and contributes research to statewide comprehensive historic preservation plan.
  - d. Participates in archaeological excavation projects to maintain a working knowledge of South Dakota prehistory and to mitigate the impact of development on significant sites.
  - e. Conducts cultural resources reconnaissance surveys.
  - f. Tests probable historic or prehistoric sites.
2. Maintains responsibility for the inventory, consultation, and repatriation process set forth in state and federal law for unmarked burials and funerary objects for the state repository to ensure
  - a. Interprets and applies state and federal laws regarding unmarked burials.
  - b. Prepares inventories that document human remains and funerary objects held at the repository.
  - c. Coordinates consultations and repatriations and conducts negotiations with tribal governments for the return of human remains and funerary objects.
  - d. Manages excavation projects at historic and prehistoric cemeteries.

- e. Responds to reports of newly discovered unmarked burials in the state.
    - i. Travels to sites to inspect the burial site.
    - ii. Directs or oversees the exhumation of the bodies and transports them to the repository for identification.
  - f. Conducts initial autopsies to determine age, sex, and cultural affiliation of skeletal remains.
3. Maintains a computerized system to keep track of information that relates to archaeological sites to provide an effective data base for research purposes.
    - a. Records cultural artifacts, materials, and sites of historic or prehistoric significance.
    - b. Performs laboratory procedures in the analysis of artifacts which may include cleaning, reconstructing, and cataloging.
  4. Provides technical assistance to government officials, contract archaeologists, mining and exploration companies, and the public to help them understand federal and state laws.
    - a. Monitors additions, deletions, or changes in interpretation of state rules and regulations to provide appropriate technical assistance and accurate information about compliance requirements.
    - b. Assists the state archaeologist in management of the State Archaeological Research Center by monitoring funds and answering technical questions.
  5. Develops public information/education programs to inform South Dakota citizens about archaeology, prehistory, and the preservation of South Dakota's cultural heritage.
  6. Researches, edits, and writes archaeological reports to disseminate information about South Dakota archaeology of interest to professionals, scholars, schools, and the public.
  7. Performs other work as assigned.

#### **D. Reporting Relationships:**

Reports to the State Archaeologist. May supervise Archaeologists and seasonal employees.

#### **E. Challenges and Problems:**

Challenged to work with others in ensuring compliance with state and federal rules. This is difficult when having to deal within legally established deadlines and convincing others of the need for compliance.

Problems include making a site as cost effective as possible; ensuring sites are investigated when there is limited funding; ensuring seasonal and temporary employees have an adequate background in the archaeological field and laboratory methods and theory and report writing to meet work objectives; developing others interest in preserving historic sites and resources; seeking and receiving grant money or other funding; negotiating between various federal agencies, public, and tribal interests; managing and prioritizing multiple projects; establishing and maintaining rapport with numerous culturally diverse groups; negotiating sensitive issues; and achieving desired results.

#### **F. Decision-making Authority:**

Decisions made include setting priorities within established goals, suggesting changes in work plans, managing archaeological excavations, interpretation of state and federal regulations, where to find funding for projects, initial determinations of cultural affiliation, when specialists are

needed and who, whether to disinter or leave a burial in place, and scientific analysis of what is found.

Decisions referred include final mining and exploration permits, final approval on seasonal employee staffing, de-accessioning, final approval of assigned cultural identifications of human remains, final approval of staff to assist on projects, and final approval on budgets and work plans.

#### **G. Contact with Others:**

Daily or weekly contact with the Archaeological Research Center staff to share information and to give and receive instruction and assistance; staff of the Historic Preservation Center, the public, and state and federal cultural resource managers to give or receive information; daily with landowners, contract archaeologists, construction engineers, mining and exploration managers, and project managers to discuss project work plans and compliance requirements; and frequent contact with state, federal, tribal, and private groups to give and receive information and discuss funding.

#### **H. Working Conditions:**

Typical office environment and in the field. Field work is done outside under varying weather conditions and in different locales. Extensive walking and manual labor may be necessary during excavation and survey projects.

#### **I. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:**

Knowledge of:

- regulations that relate to mining, exploration and cultural resource management;
- fiscal management techniques and procedures;
- museum studies;
- South Dakota archaeological, prehistory, history, and geography; and archaeological laboratory analysis and excavation methods and techniques.

Ability to:

- excavate archaeological sites;
- use a computer;
- conduct research;
- follow written and oral instructions;
- communicate information clearly and concisely;
- interpret legal requirements;
- analyze information to see whether it meets established criteria;
- effectively interact with people and organizations;
- determine the value of cultural resources and archaeological sites;
- inventory archaeological sites, surveys, maps, and related information;
- manage archaeological collections;
- supervise, motivate, and evaluate seasonal archaeologists and volunteers;
- deal tactfully with others;
- communicate information clearly and concisely;
- maintain and establish an effective working relationship with landowners, construction project managers, seasonal or contract workers, and tribal governments.